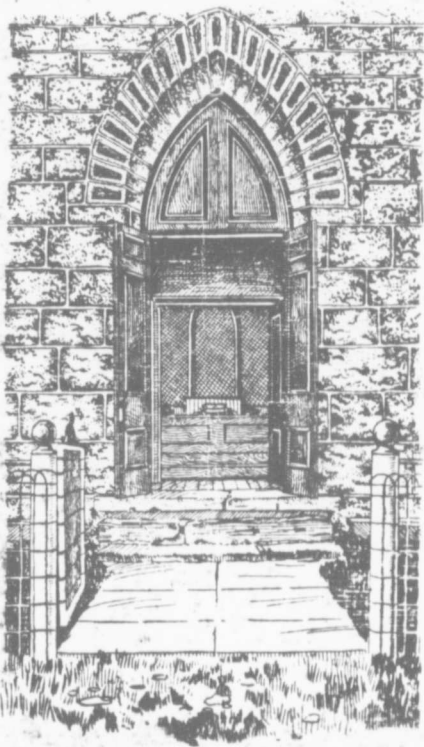


ARKY

nos. L. Scott.

Semi-Centenary
Souvenir
of
Cromarty Presbyterian Church



Introduction



THE Semi-Centenary celebration of Cromarty Presbyterian Church was held on Sabbath, June 27th, and Monday, June 28th, 1915, and was most successful in every way. The weather during both days was perfect for the celebration, and many who had been associated with the congregation in past years came from far and near to be present at the Jubilee Services.

It added much to the interest of the occasion to have Rev. R. M. Hamilton, B. A., of Toronto, whose grandfather had donated the lot on which the first Presbyterian church in Hibbert was erected, present to conduct the special services on the Lord's Day. The church was filled to its utmost capacity at both the morning and evening services, and the helpful services were much appreciated by the large congregations, the discourses containing sympathetic reminiscences of the past and unfolding worthy visions for the future.

Another interesting feature of the services was that the praise during the morning service was conducted in a manner similar to that in which it was conducted when the church was opened, only the Psalms and paraphrases were sung and the selections were sung without the accompaniment of the organ. Mr. F. L. Hamilton, now of Galt, led the service of praise in which the people heartily joined.

It was a very memorable and touching scene, when the people lingered about the church door at the conclusion of the morning service to renew friendships and recall incidents associated with childhood days.

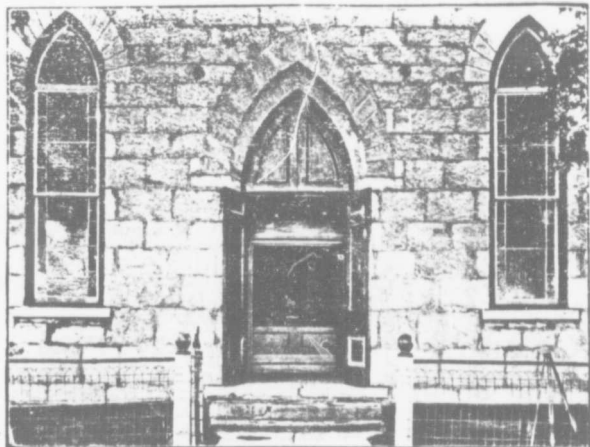
On Monday, June 28th, a most successful picnic was held in the Mountain Grove, and a field day of races for the Sabbath School pupils and games for the adults was held in the adjoining field. The tug-of-war between the married and single men, will never be forgotten by those who took part and those who looked on, for all alike were exhausted by the excitement and strain of the titanic struggle.

At the close of the races and games an interesting programme was rendered in the Grove. Rev. R. M. Hamilton and visiting ministers and friends gave interesting addresses, and the musical programme was pleasantly supplemented by a song by Mr. George Hamilton, of Atwood, who was one of the masons who built the walls of Cromarty church in 1864.

An attractive programme of music was rendered in the church on Monday evening and Rev. A. Cranston, of Palmerston, and Rev. R. G. McKay, of Alvinston, former ministers of Cromarty, gave helpful addresses, and the minister read the Historical Sketch of the congregation.

See also...

A very interesting feature of the Monday evening programme was the presentation of a handsome pulpit Bible to the congregation by fourteen of the members of the congregation all of whom were over seventy years of age.



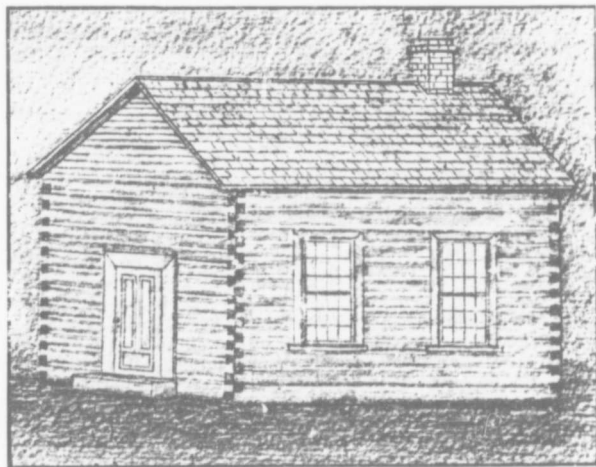
Front of Church

Historical Sketch

Cromarty Presbyterian Church was erected in the year 1864 A. D., but in order that we might better understand why it was built in Cromarty, it will be necessary for us to recall to mind the first Presbyterian congregation in Hibbert, with which this church is associated.

On February 28th, 1851, a meeting of the settlers was held in Mr. Wm. Roy's home to consider the advisability of building a church. At the meeting Mr. Wm. Roy offered a site on his property for a church and cemetery. Mr. Andrew Morgan also offered a site on his property for the same purpose, but the site on Mr. Roy's property was at that time more central for the majority of the congregation, and being a most attractive one, those at the meeting accepted his site, and that same year a log church was erected opposite the present Roy's church.

During 1851 and 1852, many homesteaders located in the direction of Cromarty, and it was advocated by the new settlers that another church should be built in the vicinity of Cromarty, which would be more accessible to them than the church at Fullarton. A meeting of the congregation was called to consider the matter. At the meeting Mr. Francis Hamilton donated a site for a church and cemetery on his property, the congregation accepted it and proceeded to build another log church on lot eleven, concession eleven, Hibbert. The church was built in the year 1852, being the first Presbyterian Church in Hibbert. We are informed, however, that services were conducted in the log barn on Mr. George Hamilton's farm before the log church was built on Mr. Francis Hamilton's farm and that Betsy Hamilton and Elizabeth Muir were baptised at one of the services held in the log barn.



The Log Church

From 1851 to 1854, the services held in the two churches at Fullarton and Hibbert were conducted by catechists, Mr. Fraser and Mr. Kennedy. On March 3rd, 1853, Rev. John Proudfoot, of London, was commissioned by London Presbytery to visit the people in Fullarton and Hibbert and organize them into a congre-

gation. Those who were present at the meeting held in Mr. Alex. Park's home were Alex Park, Mary Park, Mrs. Roy, John Hamilton, Elizabeth Hamilton, Jane McVey, James Russell, Robert Christie, Andrew Morgan, James Christie, George Hamilton, Agnes McDonald, Duncan Stewart, Alex. Clark, John Barr and Mrs. Agnes Christie. Rev. John Proudfoot rode on horseback from London to conduct the meeting.

The first ordained minister to be placed in charge of the congregation was the Rev. John Fotheringham. He was ordained and inducted into the charge on February 27th, 1856. The congregation at that time was designated "Hibbert and Flat Creek" and consisted of four preaching appointments viz: Fullarton, Hibbert, Flat Creek and Osborne. Flat Creek and Osborne were later on called Kirkton appointment, and in the year 1862, Kirkton was united with Thames Road. Then Fullarton and Hibbert constituted one congregation which was entered on the church records as Hibbert congregation.

The first elders of the congregation were Charles McVey, Alex. Duncan, Junior, and William Edmond. In the year 1857 an election of elders was held by the joint congregation, with the desire to increase the number of elders on the session, Francis Hamilton, John Begg, John McDougall and James Russell were elected, but all declined to accept the office.

In the year 1862 another election of elders was held by Fullarton and Hibbert congregations with the desire to have two additional elders from Fullarton and three from Hibbert. Donald Park, Gilbert McIntyre, Thomas Laing, James Hamilton, James Russell were elected, and Donald Park and Gilbert McIntyre accepted the responsibilities of the office and were ordained and inducted on November 7th, 1862.

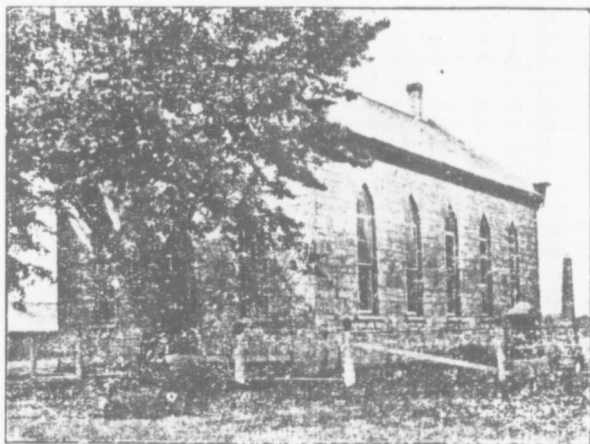
The first official proposal to build the church in which Cromarty congregation now worships was introduced at a meeting of the congregation held in Hibbert church, April 28th, 1862. Rev. John Fotheringham presided and Mr. James Gillespie acted as secretary. The extract from the minutes of the meeting is as follows: "It was moved by Donald Park, seconded by Alex. Ferguson and agreed to that it is desirable to have more church accommodation. It was moved by Wm. Roy, seconded by John McDougall and carried that a new church should be built as far west as Cromarty." In the session records we find the following minute: "October 21st, 1862. The session appointed that a meeting of the congregation should be held on November 10th next, after public worship in Hibbert, to consider the matter of church building." In agreement with the above minute, we find a meeting of the congregation was held on November 10th, 1862 in Hibbert, the minister presiding at

the meeting and acting as secretary. The minutes of the meeting read as follows : Hibbert, November 10th, 1862. The congregation met and after public worship the pastor presided and acted as secretary. It was agreed to appoint a church building committee and authorize them to ask subscriptions, the heading of the subscription list to contain the following stipulations, viz. : First—That one fourth the sums subscribed shall be paid next February. Second—That one half of the remainder of the sum shall be paid in February, 1864. Third—That the remaining half shall be paid in February, 1865. Fourth—That those who cannot bind themselves to these regulations shall be allowed to date their promises in the subscription list. It was agreed to authorize the church building committee to take further steps for the erection of a church at Cromarty as they may see necessary, it being provided that they shall not take any such steps except there shall be subscribed at least one thousand dollars. Agreed that if the money subscribed should be enough to warrant the attempt to build a session house, that the committee should make provision for this accordingly. Agreed that the church shall be stone. Agreed that efforts shall be made to provide stone, lime, sand, and, if it shall appear profitable, any other material. Agreed that the committee be composed of the following persons, viz. : Alex Ferguson, Neil McKellar, Robert Hamilton, John Hoggarth, Robert Barbour, James Taylor, James Shillinglaw, James Park, John McTavish. Agreed that the committee have power to add to their members. Agreed that Alex. Ferguson be convenor of the committee and that he shall be bound to convene the committee at the request of three of its members." Signed—John Fotheringham, Chairman and Secretary.

It should be noted in connection with the original building committee that John Hoggarth died in May, 1864, and Robert Hoggarth his brother, was appointed to take his place on the committee. Mr. Robert Hoggarth is the only surviving member of that committee and he was present at the jubilee services.

The site on which the church is built was donated by Mr. Donald McKellar, the father of Mr. Duncan McKellar, the present owner of the farm, lot 16, concession 11, Hibbert. During the year 1863 the building committee were apparently busy soliciting subscriptions and making necessary arrangements for building the new church, and in January, 1864, they were evidently ready to begin work on the church, for at a meeting of the building committee held in Cromarty on January 22nd, 1864, "It was moved by John Hoggarth, seconded by James Shillinglaw, that tenders be advertised for in the Globe newspaper and by fifty hand-bills." One of the entries in the cash book of the building committee reads as follows : "November 15th, 1864. Sent by letter to George Brown, twelve dol-

lars for advertising for tenders for building the church." It was agreed by the building committee at their meeting, January 22nd, 1864., "That a stone bee be held on Wednesday, January 27th." The advertisement in the Globe inviting tenders and the arrangements for the stone bee on January 27th, marked the commencement of bringing into tangible realization the ambition of the settlers to have a church that was, at the time, second to none in Western Ontario. It was a big task for those original homesteaders, but by their perseverance and exceptional self-sacrifice and their confidence in God, they succeeded in their commendable but tremendous task. The quarried stone for the walls of the church was taken from the quarry on lot 19, concession 11, Hibbert. The men had none of the modern equipment, such as electric drills and high explosives that are used in the quarries in the present age. The stones were obtained by drilling a number of holes in a line where they desired the rock to split, and then steel wedges were inserted in the holes and driven in with sledge hammers until the rock split open. Mr. Wm. Roy, who was a mason by trade, came in July, 1863, and showed the Cromarty men how to quarry. The quarrying of the stone went on during the summer and autumn of 1863 and the stones were then brought to the church site on sledges during the winter.



The Church

The men of the congregation made the lime used in building the church. The lime stones were obtained on the farm now occupied by Mr. John McLachlan, lot 18, concession 11, and the process of burning the limestone was as follows: Huge logs were piled five layers deep and on the top of these logs the limestone was evenly distributed. Fires were then laid at four different points under the logs, and on a perfectly calm day the fires were kindled at the different points so that the logs would burn simultaneously. After the fire had consumed the logs there was enough excellent lime left to complete the building of the church. The building sand was obtained on the north side of the mountain and the slacked lime was mixed with sand and finally soured, according to the old country recipe, and all made ready for the masons to use.

The original intention of the committee was to build the quarried stones on the flat, but when the wall was built up as far as the windows, it was found that they could not get sufficient quarried stone from the quarry to complete the church. Consequently it was decided to build the quarried stones on their edge for the outside walls, and build the inside of the walls and the back gable of the church with field stones. The sills for the windows were purchased in Guelph. They were sent by rail to Stratford, and Mr. Neil McKellar, who was one of the most enthusiastic promoters of the church and one of the most interested workers in building and maintaining the church, drove to Stratford with his team and brought the sills safely to their destination. The builders of the church did not have any derricks, consequently all the stone had to be wheeled up gangways to the masons. It is when we note some of the difficulties of construction in the early days that we appreciate, in a measure, the amount of labor that was put on this church when it was built and understand something of the sacrifice made by the small congregation who built it.

Mr. John Watson was the contractor for the stone work of the building, and when he put the last stone in place and gave the last stroke with his trowel, he is said to have remarked "I'll guarantee that wall for one thousand years." Mr. Peter Boyd was the contractor for the carpenter work. The stone work of the church cost about eight hundred dollars and the carpenter work about seven hundred dollars, making an approximate amount of \$1,500, as the initial cost of the building. The cost of lathing and plastering and seating of the church is not included in the \$1,500.

Previous to 1868 the permanent pews had not been placed in the church. The people were eager enough to have them installed, but they simply did not have the means to put them in. Provisional seating was secured by taking the benches from the log church that had been vacated, and additional benches were constructed

from split basswood logs, with wooden pegs inserted in them as supports. Thomas Leadstone, of Mitchell, plastered the church in the summer of 1868, and his chief assistant and laborer was J. J. McLaren, who was then a lad of sixteen years of age.

On March 16th, 1868, the building committee met and at the meeting it was decided to advertise for tenders to finish the interior of the church, and arrangements were made at this meeting to have the permanent pews placed in the church, which are the pews that are now in use. The pine of which they are made was purchased in the rough at Monkton, and delivered at Mitchell, and the members of the congregation conveyed the timber from Mitchell to the church. The pews and mouldings were all made by hand in the church, and members of the church, who are now grandfathers, played among the shavings as boys, when the men were at work. The three Stewart brothers, Angus, James and Alex. and John McVey were the men who made the pews.

The church was opened in January, 1865. Rev. Mr. Ball, of Guelph, conducted the dedication service.

On February 12th, 1874, at a meeting of the building committee, which had added to its members, Messrs. John Barr, Hugh Currie and James Gillespie, it was agreed that Alex. Ferguson should canvass the 8th and 9th concessions west from Staffa, and John Barr east from Staffa, and that Robert H. Hamilton canvass the 10th and 11th concessions east from Cromarty and Robert Hoggarth west from Cromarty, and James Gillespie to canvass the 12th and 13th concessions. As a result of this canvass the congregation was apparently able to clear off most of the debt.

To appreciate the self-sacrifice that was made by the people to build the church we must keep in mind that the settlers were busy hewing out their homes and their farms from the virgin forest, and they had little or no crop for sale. Their chief means of subsistence was the making and disposing of potash, and when the first settlers located their nearest railway station was Woodstock. At the time the church was built there would be only about sixty families associated with the congregation. From what has been stated we can understand something of the self-sacrifice of the men who built the church, but we must not forget the part the women had in all the work. They not only did the spinning and made garments for the family, and did the baking, washing and mending, but while the men were absent drawing material for the church, and quarrying stone and burning lime, the women kept affairs in order on the homestead.

Before closing this sketch of the church, it is noteworthy that only five ministers have been in charge of the congregation: Rev.

John Fotheringham, 1855 to 1872; Rev. Peter Scott, 1872 to 1901; Rev. R. A. Cranston, B. A., 1902 to 1907; Rev. R. G. McKay, M. A., 1907 to 1911; Rev. D. Ritchie, minister in charge.

The board of management at the time the church was built, consisted of the following members: Messrs. George Hamilton, Alex. Ferguson, Donald Park, James Hamilton, Jas. Park, Thos. Murray, Thos. Muir, Gilbert McIntyre, William Roy, Neil McKellar, Ben jamin Hoggarth and James Anderson.

The first church officer was Mr. John McLaren, who was appointed on October 18th, 1865.

The missionary committee during the same year were: Chas. McVey, Senior, President; Thos. Laing, Secretary and Arch. McLean.

The building committee have been already named. The elders acting on the session when the church was erected were: Messrs. Charles McVey, Senior; Donald Park, Thos. Laing, George Miller, Senior.

The foregoing sketch will enable the present generation to appreciate the self-sacrifice of the pioneer settlers to honour God, and we trust that the faithfulness of these early settlers will stimulate their descendants to be loyal to their fathers' God.

Elders

The names of the Elders who have officiated in Cromarty congregation are as follows:—Charles McVey, ordained Oct. 22nd, 1856; Donald Park, ordained Nov. 7th, 1862; George Miller, ordained Aug. 11th, 1872; Thomas Laing, ordained Aug. 11th, 1872; Andrew McLellan, ordained Aug. 23rd, 1885. The above named Elders, who are now deceased, were all very faithful to the work entrusted to them, and gave sympathetic help to their ministers.

Mr. Donald Park and Mr. Thomas Laing were both teachers in the Sabbath School, and were always present and ready to help in the mid-week prayer meeting.

Mr. Park was an active Elder for fifty years and he cheerfully and sympathetically helped in every department of the work in the congregation. The cause of the British and Foreign Bible Society had in him a most loyal supporter. In all his work in the church and in the hearty hospitality of his home, it was the love of Christ that constrained him.

Mr. Wm. Oliver who was ordained on March 2nd, 1902, continued to be a helpful member of Session until he removed from the district and united with another congregation.

The following are now the Elders of Cromarty congregation: — James Scott jr., ordained March 2nd, 1902; Robert Norris, ordained March 2nd, 1902; James Laing, ordained April 16th, 1905; James McKaig, ordained April 16th, 1905; Thomas D. Oliver, ordained July 4th, 1915.



Former Elders

Charles McVey
Thos. Laing

Donald Park
Andrew McLellan

George Miller
Wm. Oliver

The Church Praise

The first precentor in the Hibbert church was Mr. George Hamilton, he was succeeded in the office by Messrs. James Park, Walter Renwick and John McVey and* eventually by Mr. F. L. Hamilton, who was precentor in Cromarty congregation for twenty years and who was present to lead the service of praise at the morning service of the fiftieth anniversary.

The service of praise continued to be rendered without the aid of any musical instrument until the year 1898, at which date the majority of the congregation expressed their desire to have the

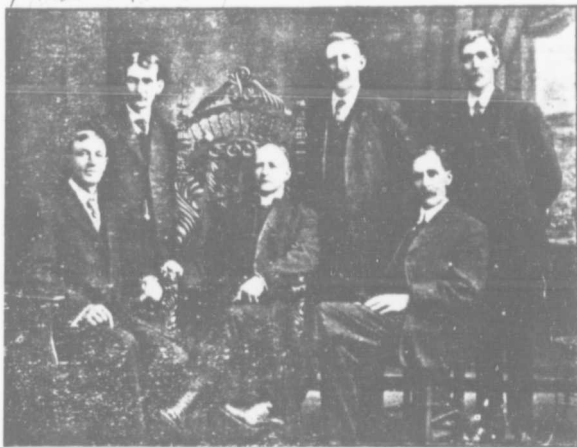
singing accompanied by an organ, and while a number in the congregation preferred the service of praise without the organ, they yielded to the wishes of the majority and the organ was installed. Miss Mary Currie was the first organist in the congregation, and for several years, devotedly and acceptably officiated at the organ, and assisted in training the choir.

The Book of Praise containing the hymns was introduced in the congregation in the year 1902. Previous to this date only the Psalms and paraphrases were sung. The first hymn sung in the church was No. 235.

The Individual Communion Service was provided in the year 1911.

559 TAKE UP THY CROSS THE SAVIOR SAID

Present Book of Praise 1891 first used 1928



The Session

James McKaig
James Laing

James Scott, jr.
Rev. D. Ritchie

Thos. Oliver
Robert Norris

Organizations

The Auxiliary of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, was organized on July 7, 1903. Miss McPherson, of Stratford, organized the Auxiliary and Mrs. James Scott was elected the first

president, Mrs. S. Miller, secretary and Mrs. John A. Norris, treasurer. The present officers are :—Mrs. D. Ritchie, M. A., president ; Mrs. (Dr.) Tufford, secretary ; Mrs. James Hill, treasurer ; Mrs. T. M. Hamilton, secretary of Scattered Helpers.

A Young People's Society which proved to be a very helpful organization, was established in 1891. Miss Helen McLaren, now Mrs. Hodgson, was the chief promoter of the organization. Rev. P. Scott, was the first president. Miss Elizabeth Laing, now Mrs. Neil Gillespie, the first secretary and Miss Mary Gillespie the first Treasurer. The officers during the year 1915, were:—Mr. Hugh McLachlan, president ; Mr. Russell Scott, vice-president ; Miss Harriet McKellar, treasurer ; Miss Bella Campbell, rec.-secretary ; Miss Pearl Stacey, cor.-secretary.

The Girls' Mission Band was organized on Feb. 13th, 1913, by Mrs. D. Ritchie, who was elected the first president, Miss Jean McKellar, the first secretary, and Miss Pearl Stacey, treasurer.

An excellent Sabbath School and Adult Bible Class, with a band of most faithful teachers and officers, continue to carry on the branch of the work which had a large place in the hearts of the pioneer leaders of the congregation. Mr. James Scott jr., is superintendent, Mr. Robert S. Hoggarth, secretary-treasurer.

In connection with the Sabbath School there is a good library which is accessible to the whole congregation, and which is made use of by most of the families. Mr. P. Scott Barr is librarian.

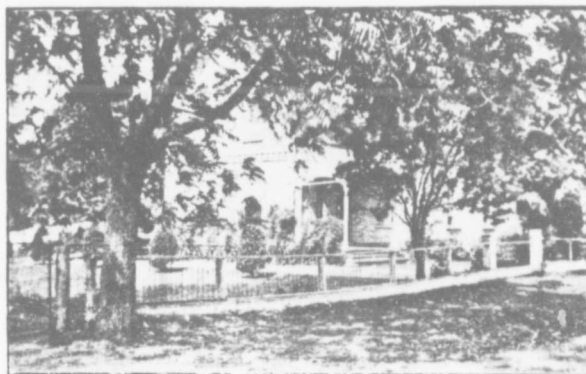
The Financial affairs of the congregation are under the supervision of the Board of Management. Mr. Alex. McKellar is Convener and Mr. Hugh McLachlan, secretary-treasurer.

The Manse

The first manse was erected in the year 1856 and was situated midway between the two congregations, Cromarty and Roy's. Mr. Donald Park donated the site for the manse on the north west corner of his farm, lot 5, concession 11, Hibbert. Only two chestnut trees and a few apple trees now mark the site of the first manse.

In the year 1878 it was agreed by the two congregations to erect a new manse and that it be built in Cromarty village. The manse Building Committee was as follows :—Messrs. Wm. Hamilton, Alex. Roy, Duncan McLaren, David Mitchell, James Balfour sr., R. D. Roy, Peter Campbell, Malcolm Park, John Barr sr., and Wm. Hamilton, Convener of the Committee.

The Manse Committee assisted by the advice of Rev. P. Scott, the minister in charge, erected in 1879 a very commodious and comfortable Manse. Rev. Mr. Scott had the foresight to plant well-chosen trees about the manse grounds which in due time made the manse property very beautiful. Rev. R. A. Cranston added to the attractiveness of the grounds by increasing the lawn space and planting shrubs, and each minister in turn has contributed something to beautify the property, so that the Cromarty manse and grounds make a very attractive home.



The Manse

The following were members or adherents of Cromarty congregation when the church was opened in the year 1855, and they were still associated with the congregation at the Jubilee Celebration in 1915:—Robert Foggarth, Mrs. James Gillespie, James Hoggarth, Mrs. Hugh Currie, Mrs. Donald Park, Andrew Patrick, Duncan McKellar, Mrs. Peter Campbell, Mrs. John Cairns, David Hill, James Barbour, Donald N. McKellar, Miss Margaret Miller, Duncan McLaren, John McDougall, Mrs. John McDougall, Mrs. Wm. Davis, John G. Miller.



Rev. John Fotheringham
1855-1872



Rev. R. A. Goodrich, B. A.
1902-1907



Rev. Peter Scott
1872-1901



Rev. R. G. MacKay, M. A.
1897-1911



Rev. D. Ritchie
Minister in Charge

Rehentali 5

"So built on the wall, the people say
"Mind to work"